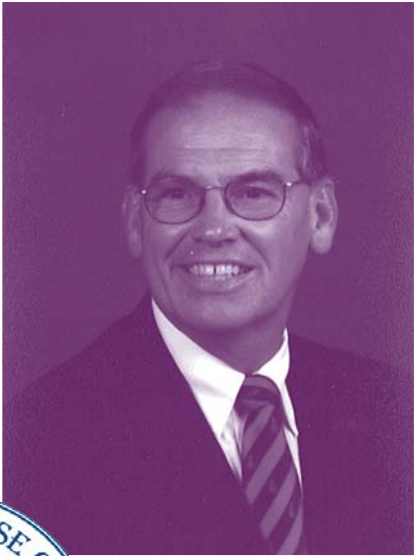
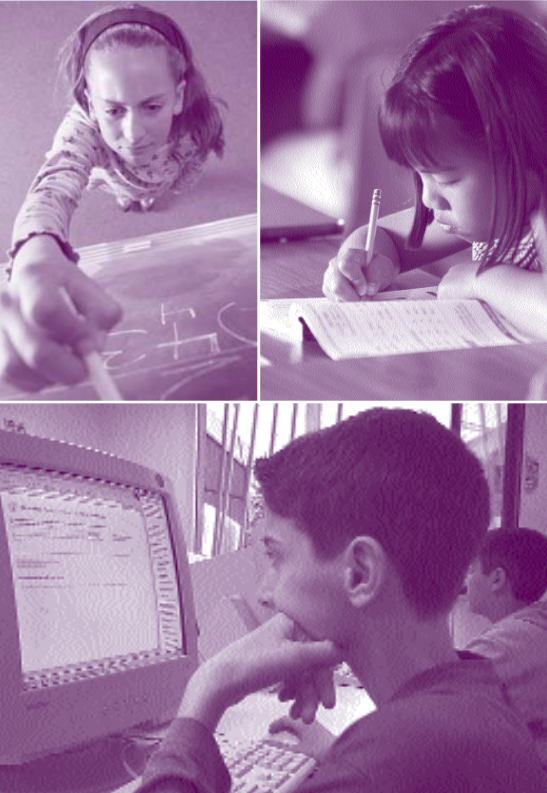


State Representative **Paul Robertson**



Session Report



- ☒ The New State Budget
- ☒ Economic Development Initiatives
- ☒ Fighting Crime
- ☒ Daylight Saving Time

INDIANA'S NEW BUDGET



School Funding Cuts and Increased Property Taxes

The new state budget that passed by a narrow margin increases property taxes and, at the same time, cuts funding for local schools. After years of bipartisan efforts to reform education and reduce property taxes, the majority party has approved a budget that will cut state funding for many schools and raise property taxes by nearly \$850 million.

I voted "NO" on the final version of the state budget because of the negative impact it will have on education, children and those who pay property taxes. I believe there will be many victims of the new state budget.

There are no minimum guarantees in state funding for schools, which means more than 140 school corporations will receive less money. Those corporations will be forced into eliminating teachers, cutting programs and increasing class sizes. Any additional funding for schools will come primarily from raising local property taxes.

There will be reduced state support through the Property Tax Replacement Credit (PTRC), another move that will increase local property taxes. This eliminates the promise of just three years ago to provide more state support to combat rising property taxes in light of the historic and controversial statewide reassessment.

"I believe there will be many victims of the new state budget."

In addition, funding for the program that provides health care for the elderly, disabled and children will increase by 5 percent, although bipartisan experts have predicted a 10-percent growth. State assistance for road repairs and improvements will decrease as well.

It is a shame that the legacy of this session will be a budget that turns its back on Indiana's schoolchildren and property taxpayers. For anyone who cares about education and local taxpayers, it is simply indefensible.



Fighting Crime

Senate Bill 164 will require a person convicted of possession of child pornography with a prior conviction for the same offense to register as a sex offender.

House Bill 1057 makes it a Class C infraction for a person in the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle to possess an alcoholic beverage container that has been opened, has a broken seal or from which some of the contents have been removed.

House Bill 1099 will make the offense of voyeurism a Class D felony instead of a Class B misdemeanor if a person is convicted of the offense a subsequent time.

Senate Bill 525 authorizes the state to seek a sentence of life imprisonment without parole for a person who commits a Class A felony constituting a sex offense against a child and who also has a prior unrelated Class A felony conviction for a sex offense against a child.



Economic Development

I believe it is the duty of the General Assembly to provide the opportunities for Indiana to **create, maintain and increase good-paying jobs** in growth areas of our economy. This year's legislature made economic development a priority.

In fact, the very first bill passed into law this session created a new public-private group—the Indiana Economic Development Corporation—to serve as the leader for development efforts across our state. I was especially pleased we were able to make changes to this corporation that will ensure it is accountable to the public.

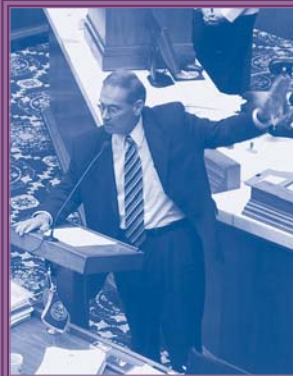
Other measures designed to help spur economic growth include **increasing the research and development tax credit**, phasing out the sales tax on research and development equipment, and extending the life and use of EDGE tax credits that help businesses retain and create jobs.

We also passed a measure that will speed the process of obtaining permits so developers can begin construction on new industrial sites. **Small business owners will receive additional tax breaks** under new legislation that will also reduce the potential that they will be harmed by government regulation.

2005 Session Highlights



Rep. Robertson listens with Rep. Jim Bottorff (D-Jeffersonville) to testimony on the House floor.



Rep. Robertson speaks at the podium on the House floor.

Speed Limits

Hoosier drivers soon will be able to go faster on major roadways in Indiana. Effective July 1, speed limits on rural sections



of interstate highways will increase from 65 to 70 mph for cars and 60 to 65 mph for

trucks. Speed limits on four-lane divided highways will increase from 55 to 60 mph following a safety study by the Indiana Department of Transportation.

Inspector General

Fraud and corruption in state government will be investigated by an inspector general created through a new state law approved in 2005. Thanks to changes championed by House Democrats, this inspector will work with locally-elected prosecutors and judges to look into charges of wrongdoing and determine whether to proceed with criminal charges.

Protecting Firefighters



Volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians will not be penalized by their employers for being absent when they are responding to emergency calls. I co-authored similar legislation in the past for school employees and hope this legislation will further protect the jobs of emergency responders.

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Daylight Saving Time passes

By now, almost everyone in Indiana has heard the news that Daylight Saving Time was passed by both chambers and signed into law following this year's legislative session.

There were countless votes taken on this subject and even more opinions about the timing and implementation of it, but I was pleased to support Daylight Saving Time in Indiana and will look forward to observing it as of April of next year.

Joining the rest of the country in observing Daylight Saving Time will help Indiana in a number of ways. It will simplify business dealings with companies which are out of state, and may even enhance Indiana's ability to attract new development and jobs as a result.

Especially important will also be the ease that it will add to the lives of Hoosiers in southern Indiana who have had to juggle time zone and Daylight Saving Time questions for years. I really believe that this change will increase the quality of life for residents in our area.

The only question that remains open is that of which time zone Indiana will be in because the law as it was passed required the Federal Department of Transportation to hold hearings on the location of the boundary between the Eastern and Central Time Zones. I feel confident, however, that southeastern Indiana will remain on Eastern Daylight Saving Time.



**Rep. Robertson speaks
in support of Daylight
Saving Time**

Representative Paul Robertson

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